

ORANGE TURNPIKE

HAER NO. NY-312

A 4,200 foot length located between the intersection of the new alignment of the Orange Turnpike and Harriman Heights Road at its southern end and a point on the new alignment of the Orange Turnpike .3 mile north of the intersection of said road at its northern end

Monroe
Orange County
New York

HAER
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PHOTOGRAPHS WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

National Park Service
Philadelphia Support Office
U.S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

ORANGE TURNPIKE

HAER No. NY-312

HAER
NY
312-MOA
1-

Location: A 4,200 foot length located between the intersection of the new alignment of the Orange Turnpike and Harriman Heights Road at its southern end and a point on the new alignment of the Orange Turnpike .3 mile north of the intersection of said road and Mombasha Road at its northern end, Monroe, Orange County, New York

USGS Monroe, New York Quadrangle
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 18.568720.4571335
and 18.568400.4572430

Date of Construction: 1800

Engineer: unknown

Present Owner: Great Expectations, Inc., 633 Route 211 East, Middletown, New York 10940

Present Use: Private drive

Significance: This portion of the Orange Turnpike is the only remaining portion of the Turnpike that has not been widened or modernized, having escaped this fate through a ca. 1917 re-routing of the turnpike around the Migel Estate and Farm (HABS No. NY-6356). The section of the Orange Turnpike that remains on the estate retains much of its nineteenth-century context, form and character, including two nineteenth-century dwellings that also pre-date the estate.

Project Information: The Migel Estate and Farm is presently being altered to construct a golf course with associated structures and single-family housing. The mansion and several of the buildings will be retained and re-used as part of the complex. Although the alignment of the Orange Turnpike will be retained as the drive for the single-family housing, it will be widened and repaved, and some trees will be removed. As per a Memorandum of Agreement among the Army Corps of Engineers, the New York State Historic Preservation Office, and the developer Great Expectations, and accepted by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, those buildings scheduled for demolition and the Orange Turnpike are being documented.

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1. Historical Information

The Orange Turnpike was the first turnpike (toll road) in Orange County (Church 1987:5), established in 1800. It seems likely that the Orange Turnpike was initially opened up as a public road during the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Military maps produced during the American Revolution depicting the region do not represent this roadway, however, several farmsteads were established along this road during the latter part of the eighteenth century and the early part of the nineteenth century, suggesting strongly that it had been opened as a public thoroughfare by that time. The route was referred to as the "stage road" in 1803 (see O.C. Deed E 181) and this name continued to be used most commonly in land records throughout the nineteenth century despite the road's incorporation as part of the Orange Turnpike.

The privately-financed Orange Turnpike Company was centered in nearby Goshen, New York (Clark 1976).

"The incorporators to the company were William Wickham, John Steward, James Everett, James Carpenter, Thomas Waters, James W. Wilkin, David M. Westcott, Anthony Dobbin, Johnathan Sweezy, John Wood, Solomon Smith, and John Gale, Jr. Its capital stock was \$6,250 and its line ran 'from the house of Moses Cunningham, in the town of Cheesecocks (Monroe), to the intersection of the roads leading from Stirling Iron Works, near the house of Stephen Sloots' running in the bed of the old road as far as circumstances permitted. By act of 1806 the capital was increased to \$46,750, and permission granted to the company [from the New York Legislature] to extend the road 'southerly to the line of the State of New Jersey, on the route to the city of New York, and also to construct a new road from the northerly part of said turnpike-road to the intersection of the Warwick road, near the village of Chester, on the route to the city of Albany,' the entire two taking the name of the Orange turnpike." (Ruttenber and Clark 1881:111)

The entire turnpike, including both the existing segment and the proposed extensions, was surveyed in 1807. The southern extension commenced in the present Mahwah, New Jersey and generally followed the present Route 17 northward to the southern end of the original turnpike segment at what is now Sloatsburg. The original section of the turnpike continued north along Route 17 to Southfield Furnace (now Southfields) and it then angled northwest to follow the present Orange Turnpike for a distance of approximately two miles to a point near the former residence of Moses Cunningham (in the vicinity of the present crossing of the Appalachian Trail). The northern extension began at this point, and, as initially surveyed, it was to angle off to the northwest to pass close by the east side of Mombasha Lake (Thompson 1807). This proposed northern extension was never developed and the present Orange Turnpike was instead surveyed and developed shortly thereafter as the northern extension (Ruttenber and Clark 1881; Southeastern New York 1946; James G. Sweeney Papers).

Although the Orange Turnpike was referred to as the "post road" in 1823 (O.C. Deed BB 376), the formal name came to be the enduring name for the route. The road was referred to as the Orange Turnpike in 1836 (O.C. Deed 63 382) and shown as such on the 1851 (Sidney 1851), 1859 (French et al. 1859), 1875 (Beers 1875), and 1903 (Lathrop 1903) maps.

The portion of the old Orange Turnpike that runs through the Migel Estate is the only remaining portion that has not been modernized and widened. The former turnpike, now a public road, was relocated to run its present course in the wake of Moses C. Migel's purchase of the Forshee, Jenkins, and Smith Farmsteads in 1914. This relocation, which was sought by Migel to remove the public roadway from the center of his estate, was approved by the Town of Monroe in 1915 (Monroe Town Board Minutes 1915) and plans for the 50-foot-wide roadway were completed in 1916 (O.C. Deed 574 443). In the following year, it was noted that the relocated road was to generally follow the course of the former "mine road leading to the O'Neal Mine" (O.C. Deed 574 444) west of the Estate. The Town of Monroe acquired the necessary rights of way from Migel (O.C. Deed 575 555), Mary W. Harriman (the owner of the O'Neal Iron Mine Property) (O.C. Deed 574 445), and Nicholas Welch (the owner of the Forshee Farmstead) (O.C. Deed 574 443) in 1917, and the new road was completed later that same year (James G. Sweeney Papers).

The re-routing isolated a school and six houses that had been accessed by the old alignment, including the W.K. Smith house (HABS No. NY-6356-A). The school, which was still standing in 1987 but is now gone, was relocated a few hundred feet to the west at the roadside of the new alignment (Church 1987:5). Four of the houses were located within 1,500 feet of the intersection with Harriman Heights Road and all were gone by 1926 (Church 1987:9).

2. Descriptive Information

The section of the Orange Turnpike that remains on the Migel Estate (HABS No. NY-6356) retains much of its nineteenth-century form and character. This section has escaped the improvements and realignments that have characterized the remainder of the Turnpike route. This section is a single-lane road paved with asphalt, without curbs, for most of its length and is unpaved at the north and south ends. The road is surrounded by grassy meadows interspersed with clusters of mature trees.

The original alignment of the Turnpike is nearly whole, and readily visible, within the estate, with the exception of the northernmost section located between the W.K. Smith House and the alignment's intersection with the present Orange Turnpike at the Estate boundaries. Use of this northern section was discontinued when the Turnpike was realigned and it has been allowed to become overgrown. The roadbed is still visible in the slight depression in the ground and in the space between the trees.

The center section of the Turnpike is a single lane wide and is paved with asphalt. This section is located between the drive to the Migel mansion at the top of the ridge and the W.K. Smith House to the north. At the Smith house, the drive becomes unpaved and turns west leading out the west gate to the Orange Turnpike realignment, passing the Estate's farm buildings. This western leg of the drive incorporates a nineteenth-century roadway.

At the south end of the estate, leading from the entrance at Harriman Heights Road to the drive to the Mansion located at the near mid-point of the alignment, the route is unpaved and most resembles its nineteenth-century appearance. The single-lane dirt road is surrounded by grassy meadows interspersed with clusters of mature trees.

3. Sources of Information

- A. Engineering Drawings: No engineering drawings have been located.
- B. Historic Views: No historic views have been located.
- C. Interviews: No interviews were undertaken as part of this documentation.
- D. Bibliography

1. Primary and Unpublished Sources

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2. Secondary and Published Sources

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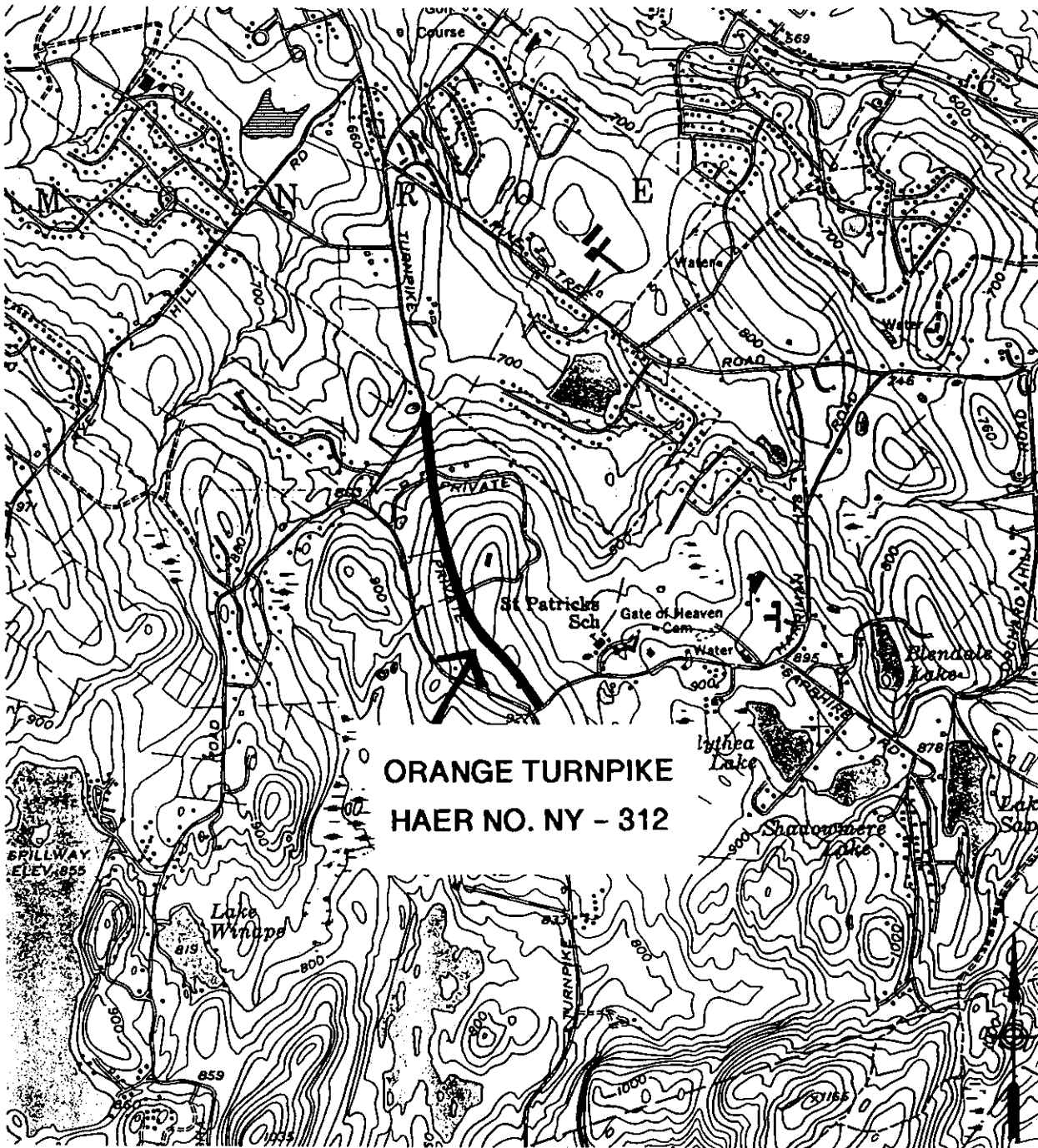
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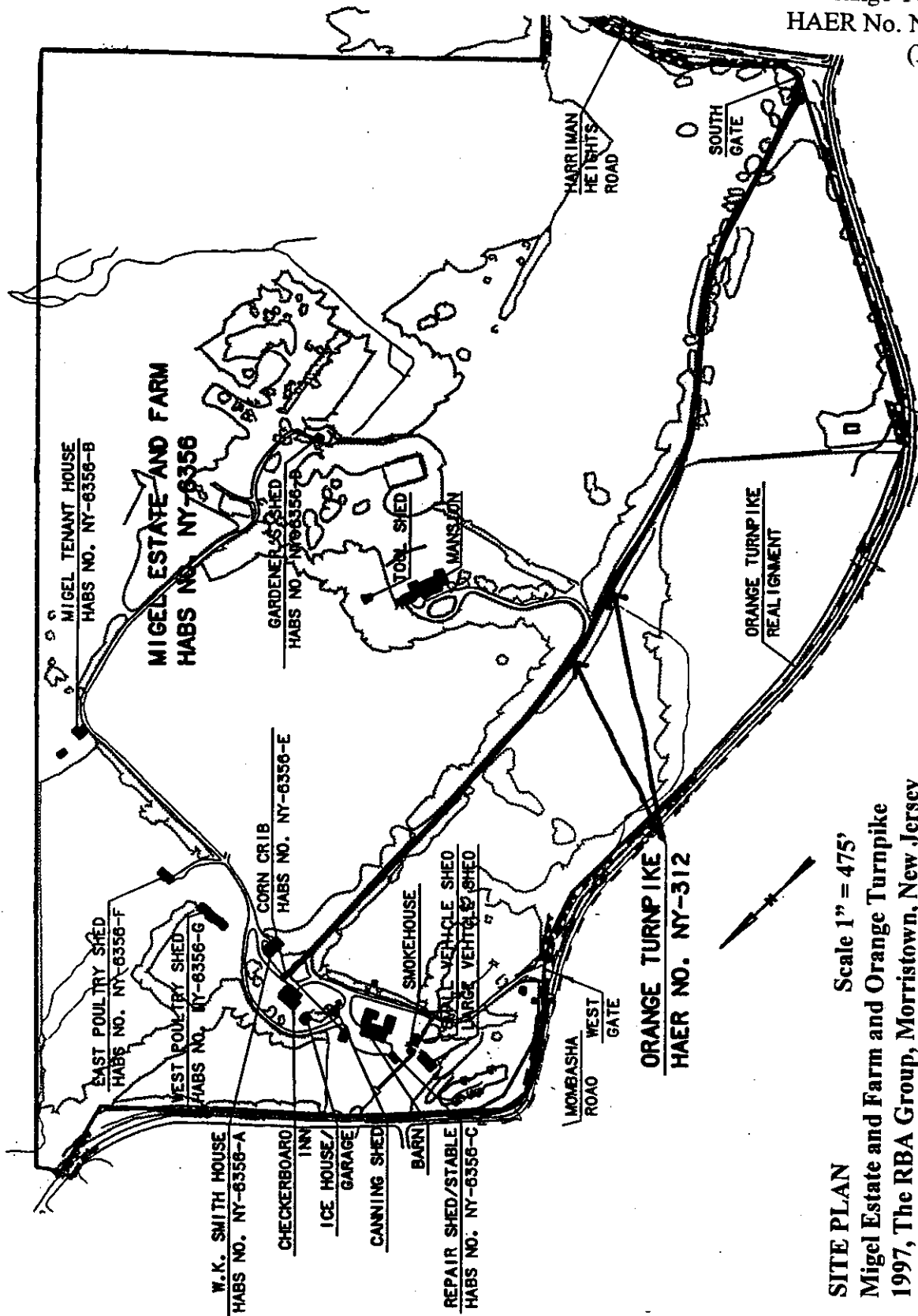
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USGS Monroe, New York Quadrangle 1957, Photorevised 1981 Scale 1:24000





SITE PLAN Scale 1" = 475'
Migel Estate and Farm and Orange Turnpike
1997, The RBA Group, Morristown, New Jersey